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BRIGHTON BRANCH COLLEGE.

JOHN GREEN
LIBRARY

PROCEEDINGS
AT THE
DEDICATION OF THE NEW BUILDING
OF THE
BRIGHTON BRANCH
OF THE
BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY.

OCTOBER 29TH, 1874.



Boston:
ISSUED BY THE BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY.
ROCKWELL AND CHURCHILL, CITY PRINTERS,
39 ANCH STREET.
1876.

OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES

OF THE

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FROM 1864 TO ITS UNION WITH THE BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY, 1874.

Presidents.

| | Elected. | Retired. |
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| JOHN RUGGLES | April 18, 1864 | October 9, 1865. |
| FREDERIC AUGUSTUS WHITNEY | November 13, 1865 | January 5, 1874. |

Secretaries.

| | | |
|--|--------------------------|------------------|
| JOHN PERKINS CUSHING WINSHIP | April 18, 1864 | March 13, 1865. |
| BELA STODDARD FISKE | March 13, 1865 | March 14, 1870. |
| WEBSTER FRANKLIN WARREN | March 14, 1870 | January 5, 1874. |

Treasurers.

| | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| LIFE BALDWIN | May 23, 1864 | March 24, 1873. |
| BELA STODDARD FISKE | March 24, 1873 | January 5, 1874. |

Librarians.

| | | |
|--|-------------------------|------------------|
| JOHN PERKINS CUSHING WINSHIP | June 13, 1864 | July 9, 1866. |
| WEBSTER FRANKLIN WARREN | July 9, 1866 | January 5, 1874. |

Trustees.

| | Elected. | Retired. |
|---|----------|----------|
| BALDWIN, HENRY | 1872 | 1873 |
| BALDWIN, LIFE | 1864 | 1873 |
| BENNETT, JOSEPH | 1870 | 1874 |
| BENYON, ABNER INGALLS | 1866 | 1868 |
| BICKFORD, WEARE DOW | 1864 | 1872 |
| BRECK, CHARLES HENRY BASS | 1867 | 1874 |
| CUSHMAN, JOHN PAINE | 1864 | 1866 |
| FAXON, CHARLES AUGUSTUS | 1873 | 1874 |
| FISKE, BELA STODDARD | 1865 | 1870 |
| " " " | 1872 | 1874 |
| FULLER, GRANVILLE | 1864 | 1874 |
| GALVIN, EDWARD ILLSLEY | 1873 | 1874 |
| HUTCHINSON, CHARLES CARROLL | 1864 | 1865 |
| JACKSON, NATHANIEL | 1864 | 1869 |
| MARION, HORACE EUGENE | 1873 | 1874 |
| MATCHETT, THEODORE | 1864 | 1867 |
| MATCHETT, WILLIAM FREDERIC | 1867 | 1872 |
| PACKARD, DAVID TEMPLE | 1867 | 1873 |
| *POND, JOSEPH ADAMS | 1864 | 1867 |
| RICE, EDMUND | 1865. | 1873 |
| RUGGLES, JOHN | 1864 | 1865 |
| WARREN, WEBSTER FRANKLIN | 1869 | 1874 |
| WARREN, WILLIAM WIRT | 1864 | 1874 |
| WHITNEY, FREDERIC AUGUSTUS | 1864 | 1874 |
| WINSHIP, JOHN PERKINS CUSHING | 1864 | 1874 |

* Died October 28, 1867.

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PROCEEDINGS.



THIS building, which is of brick with freestone trimmings, and situated on Rockland street, was begun by the town of Brighton in 1873, and was not finished, when, on the 5th of January, 1874, that town became by annexation a part of the city of Boston. The carrying forward of the work from that time devolved upon the Superintendent of Public Buildings, who reported the building ready for occupancy in August; and on the 22d the transfer of the library from the old Town Hall was begun, and the removal was completed on the 24th. The dedication was deferred till the cooler weather of the autumn, when invitations in the name of the Trustees of the Public Library of Boston were extended by the Honorable GEORGE S. HILLARD and Alderman JOHN T. CLARK, the Committee on the Brighton Branch, to various gentlemen in public and private stations.

During the day selected, Thursday, October 29th, the new building was open for inspection. In the evening the guests assembled in the vestry of the First Church, on the corner of Washington and Market streets, at six and a half o'clock, where they were entertained by the ladies of Brighton. The Rev. Mr. WHITNEY invoked a blessing and invited them to the repast, and an hour was spent in social intercourse. The services then followed in the main audience hall of the church, His Honor SAMUEL C. COBB presiding. Prayer was offered by the Rev. EDWARD I. GALVIN of the First Church. Then came singing by a large choir of children from the public

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Withdrawn from General Library

schools, under the direction of Mr. CHARLES E. WHITING. A selection from the Scriptures was read by the Rev. FRANCIS E. TOWER, of the Baptist Church.

MAYOR COBB then spoke as follows : —

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, — We are assembled in accordance with well-established custom to dedicate the Brighton Branch of the Boston Public Library to the uses for which it has been designed.

The union of the local library, that bears the name of its honored founder, with that sustained at the public cost, is an event worthy of commemoration, and I congratulate the citizens of Brighton upon the auspicious consummation.

With a building like this, which comprises all the accommodations of a first-class library, which is delightfully situated near the centre of this pleasant and populous district, and which contains such stores of knowledge and healthful entertainment free to all, — we may well pause at this time to place on record our appreciation of the great privileges that have been vouchsafed to us in these latter days, whereby the means for obtaining sound knowledge and wholesome recreation have been made so accessible.

I feel especially favored, therefore, in being allowed to join with you in these dedicatory exercises.

I will now ask your attention to words of information and counsel that will be addressed to you by gentlemen who are more immediately connected with the administration of the Public Library.

WILLIAM W. GREENOUGH, Esq., the President of the Trustees, then delivered the following address : —

MR. MAYOR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, — It would be a superfluous undertaking on the part of the Trustees of the Public Library, to especially commend to your sympathies at the present time an institution founded in 1864, and for ten years so largely important to the inhabitants of Brighton. Without changing its relations to this district, and it is to be hoped with increasing value, it has now become a branch of the Public Library of the city of Boston, that greater community in which your citizens have merged their corporate condition.

The elegant and commodious edifice constructed for the reception of the Holton Library, designed and begun before the union with Boston, and the completion of which we now gather to commemorate, suffi-

ciently indicates the position which the library had attained in popular regard, as compared with the other public institutions.

There is no argument now to be made in New England on the subject of Free Lending Libraries. What was an experiment at the beginning of this generation is now a certainty which no community that has experienced its benefits will willingly relinquish. One now approximately knows the relation which the printed literature of the day bears to the wants of readers of varying tastes and knowledge; one measures the demand for the different classes of work having a permanent value; one gathers from the statistics how much fiction and how much solid reading the general average of communities absorb — not how much of the more substantial portion can be used, but how much and in what actual percentage the movement of intellectual progress displays itself. There is with us in New England and through the United States the same common type of humanity with the same taste for fiction as is shown in England, France, and the other civilized countries of Europe, which draws largely for books on its favorite topic from all accessible libraries; so much so that with an increase of the proportion of light literature in any of these collections a larger proportionate circulation will be obtained. This brings us at once to the problem as to where the reading of fiction will stop, and the absorption of books of permanent value begin. In gathering and gradually augmenting a library, what shall be the relative proportions of works of the imagination and of books of permanent value?

The solution of this question is easily found by the readers of each library as the facts are shown in the statistics of its circulation. This numeration of use shows not only what each community does with the books within its reach, but also what it desires to have, and the educational and other uses which the library serves; and these are always upward and onward when the library has a responsible and observant administrator.

These are general points which need no especial notice now, but which were doubtful contingencies twenty years since. I make no apology in presenting them to you as indications of the development of a system now reckoned as among the necessary conditions of a growing civilization.

In the enjoyment for ten years of the privileges of a properly supervised and well-selected library, and now in the *change* from a principal to a branch library, the inquiry naturally suggests itself as to where the institution will stand in the new relation between the Nineteenth Ward and the city of which it has become a component part.

Upon this point, so important to your cultivation and entertainment, it is beyond the power of the Trustees to enter upon any absolute guaranties. It is, however, safe to say that whatever annual provision is

made in the future by the city government for the sustenance of the Public Library will be shared in due proportion by the branches. The Library of the City of Boston, with its branches, now contains the largest, and probably the most useful and most important, collection of books in North or South America. It has so intimately connected itself with the education and development, not only of our own city and Commonwealth, but also with the needs of advanced and scientific classes elsewhere, that it must go forward as a public necessity — grown and strengthened by the continuous sympathy and intelligence of the government. It is among the most honorable indications of the character of our municipality that it has never failed to respond to the increasing demands upon its treasury for the support and development of free lending libraries as an acknowledged and progressive form of popular education.

Having transferred the control of this library to a new Board of Trustees, it is natural that information should be desired relative to the changes, if any, which will be experienced in the supply of books and in convenience of access to them. Upon these points it is presumed that no change will be apparent except in increasing the number of hours during which the library shall be accessible; but, in addition to this, there is now afforded by the system of administration the opportunity to obtain from the great Central Library the books that simply popular libraries may not contain. In this library, the principles which have been applied to the other branches, and which have so far been sufficient for the purpose, will be continued in force. The books which are needed will be supplied in proportion to the means provided, giving preference always to those which are useful to the largest number of people. If, besides these, books are required by students following special pursuits, they must be asked for upon the regularly arranged system. This is a part of the natural growth of any library, intended to meet the needs of its neighborhood; for each district or collection of people dwelling together has its own separate and special wants in books, as it has its own local development of character, tastes and convenience of life.

But, in becoming a branch of the Public Library, this collection still remains an institution of your own charge and sympathetic oversight; and an invaluable trust committed to the safeguard of your people. If heretofore a source of honor and pride to your community, its value and credit must not be diminished in future. Such donations and legacies as shall be made to it by the far-reaching foresight of your citizens will be sacredly devoted to the precise purposes for which such donations shall be made. If works of a character too valuable for circulation should be presented to it, they will be held for use in the library according to the desire of the donor. If of money, either for the direct

purchase of books, or to be funded with the object of employing its income for the acquisition of general or specified classes of books, the expenditures will be made as prescribed by the donor. In constituting this library as a branch of the great city library it would be a large misfortune if it withdrew the institution from your own kindly regard and aid. The funds so judiciously bestowed by Mr. and Mrs. Fellowes, of Roxbury, will eventually build up, in that precinct, a library that would be an honor to any populous city.

Through the means provided by the annual appropriations, it has not been within the scope of any well-considered system to purchase the more costly issues from the press, usually desired for individual gratification, but acquisitions have been necessarily limited to books most largely in request, — the better works in Biography, Travels and History, the class-books in Science and Art, and the new and most important books of reference. These of themselves make a good and sufficient library for ordinary purposes. It is a great advantage of the authors of our time that their works may comprise the best and most valuable knowledge of the past, with the enormous additions that modern science and its manifold developments have bestowed on all works for the onward progress of the human race. Indeed, so far as practical value is concerned, a well-selected collection of a few thousand volumes of modern books will contain almost everything that is imperishable in the literature of the past, as well as the present, bringing therewith most of the knowledge which each day's experience is adding to the treasures of human thought which have been made living and evident in type. Value and working capability are not to be gauged by the number of volumes. No matter how large the collection may be, unless it acquires the best modern books, and keeps them readily accessible, it does not fulfil its appropriate functions. In increasing year by year this excellent library with the new publications of interest and importance, the Trustees earnestly hope that the institution will fill the full measure of usefulness which the culture and civilization of this intelligent community may demand.

A selected DEDICATION HYMN was then sung. The words, written by the late Dr. THOMAS GRAY, Jr., were as follows : —

O God, within whose radiant beam
The sacred tree of knowledge grew,
Fresh watered by a holier stream
Than Siloam's fountain ever knew, —

That tree of life's eternal fruit
 A mightier than the Hebrew gave,
 And sent to lave its living root
 A purer stream than Horeb's wave.

And may it flow forever fair,
 Here, as it flowed in days of yore,
 When God's own spirit kindled there,
 And bade its living waters pour.

Lord, speed that ray with power to save,
 From heart to heart, from clime to clime,
 Above the stars, beyond the grave,
 Through countless worlds and endless time!

May unborn thousands here repose
 In wisdom's light their upward wings,
 And drink from every wave that flows
 Eternal life's undying springs!

The Mayor next introduced the Rev. FREDERIC A. WHITNEY, who was the last President of the Trustees of the Holton Library, under its organization before annexation, who delivered the following

ADDRESS OF DEDICATION.

MR. MAYOR, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:—It has not been unusual in the recent dedication of public libraries to occupy, for the public services, other places than the library edifices. So was it with the fine library at Concord, Massachusetts, one year ago this month, and with the Thayer Library at Braintree, more recently; so with the Newton Library, and with the East Boston and the South Boston branches of our own great city library. In selecting for the present exercises this adjacent church, the first in this ward of Boston and the third in its founding of the three original precinct churches of the town of Cambridge, which, till 1807, included Brighton,—we go not away from our early Puritan instincts. The free public library, as so often affirmed, is but the natural and necessary complement of the New England system of free schools; and the free school and the church, most closely knit, were, as all know, the essential pillars on which the New England Commonwealth was built up.

The Public Library of Boston comprises, besides the grand Central Library on Boylston street, five branches, located in the several city districts of Brighton, Charlestown, East Boston, Roxbury and South

Boston. Two other branches are in process of establishment in the city districts of Dorchester and West Roxbury; neither of which districts, while under their town organization, had any free public library. Brighton and Charlestown had such free libraries several years before annexation.

Appropriate to the occasion in the remarks which I have been requested to offer will be, first, a brief notice of the two earlier libraries for circulation which had existed in this place previous to that which has absorbed them both, and whose inauguration we are met to celebrate in its new edifice and under its new city régime.

By an interesting coincidence, a half-century has just closed since the establishment of the first of these institutions. In February, 1824, the Brighton Social Library was opened. The names of sixty-seven original proprietors are found in the venerable records, the list being headed by the Winship brothers, Jonathan and Francis, descendants of Edward, one of the earliest Cambridge settlers, both natives, and during their long lives warmly interested in this place. The names of most of the leading men of the town at that time are thus enrolled as paying proprietors, while, as the record runs, "In testimony of the friendship and high consideration entertained by the subscribers for the Rev. John Foster, D.D., they hereby constitute him an honorary member of the association, entitled to all its privileges." He had been then forty years sole minister of the town.

Besides books purchased, others were quite liberally contributed by the citizens, the names of which and of their donors were recorded. A catalogue was at once issued, containing the constitution, proprietors' names, and titles of nearly six hundred volumes, — for that day and population a very respectable collection. A single copy of this little catalogue has floated down on the tide of the half-century, and by the kindness of its owner, Mr. William R. Champney, an original proprietor, is preserved in the present Holton, or Boston branch library. The place of its publication would not, perhaps, be recognized to-day, save by the curious eye of Mr. Samuel G. Drake, or of Dr. Shurtleff, — alas, that I must now say, the lamented Dr. Shurtleff! * — whose genial face would have gladdened our assembly this evening but for that stern mandate which mortals may not decline. Simple indisposition would not have detained him, as, to our sorrow, we have just seen it did not detain him, from engagements that enlisted his heart. The title-page of the catalogue bears this imprint, — "Printed at the Howard Gazette office, No.

* Dr. N. B. Shurtleff anticipated with great interest our dedication. But he died suddenly, on the 17th inst., twelve days before, of apoplexy (induced by exposure from official engagements), at his home in Dorchester. As Mayor of the city, as well as Trustee and Commissioner of the Public Library, he was from the beginning devoted to its interests.

I., Dock Square, Boston." A larger catalogue was issued by Dutton & Wentworth in 1836, then a half-score years before the City Public Library was talked of, showing considerable accessions. The first librarian, Elijah White, Jr., merchant, was succeeded by Abraham Edwards, lawyer of the place. Moses Kingsley, Miss Sarah Jane Kingsley, Rev. Daniel Austin, for many years second minister of the First Church here, and Miss Harriet Champney, followed in the office; when Wm. Warren Jr., but lately deceased, took the charge, which, with the liveliest interest in whatever pertained to the welfare of the town, he held during the last twenty-one years of its corporate existence, or from 1837 to 1858, the library-room being then connected with his drug-store on Washington street, opposite Rockland, in this place.

This small library did good service in its day. In the great advantages of our own time, in the richness of our literary and scientific, our charitable, moral and religious institutions, our numerous public and private schools and libraries, and in the literature which has unconsciously grown up with them all, we can hardly realize the comparative dearth of books accessible to the public a half century ago. Very few towns in Massachusetts had any library for circulation when this Brighton Social Library was opened. Boston, then but two years under a city charter, had hardly fifty thousand inhabitants, — not so many as her Roxbury District, Wards 13, 14, 15, the first corporate town of her annexations, now contains. Boston had not then a single free library for circulation, of any name. The Massachusetts Historical Society Library, dating from 1791, the old Boston Library from 1794, the Boston Athenæum from 1807, and the Mercantile from 1820, — all that had been established in Boston before 1824, — were none of them such. The Massachusetts State Library at our State House was not founded until 1826.

Think, too, I pray you, of the brilliant authors whom the last half-century has produced, bright stars in every department of literature, then below the horizon, both in our own country and abroad. Of the rich and multiform publications of Webster and of Everett, now so accessible to all readers, how little had been produced in that morning twilight of this past half-century! When the library opened, people, I remember, were still reading with delight Webster's Plymouth oration, in 1820, on the second centennial of the Pilgrim landing, his earliest literary discourse to thrill the popular heart; and, in the very year of the opening, Everett's classic oration before the Phi Beta Kappa Society at Cambridge, in presence of Lafayette, was spoken; and that now stands first in order of time in his collections of four large volumes of unrivalled eloquence. Our school-house platforms echo still the fine passages of those masterly orations, whose authors Tuckerman has so

fitly denominated the Michael Angelo and the Raphael of American oratory. The completed lives and works of Washington, of the Adamases, as of other prominent actors in our early and our more recent American annals, — Jefferson, Madison, Monroe; of Quincy the early patriot and Quincy the son; of Calhoun, Clay, Benton, Cass; of Sumner and Andrew — peace to their yet green graves! — had not been published. Of the accomplished scholar, George Ticknor, whose name must not be passed by in connection with the origin and growth of the Boston Public Library, little of all that has since contributed to his broad reputation had been then produced. Of Washington Irving, copious and favorite author, little had come in form accessible to the public, save “The Knickerbocker,” the “Sketch Book,” and “Bracebridge Hall,” and they were, indeed, in this early collection. The little library, quietly nestled here on our right, upon the principal street, beneath arching elms that had seen New England’s prime, must wait forty years for the completion of Palfrey’s “History of New England” — so accurate, so exhaustive — and his other works that now grace our alcoves. Of Channing, we recall little published before 1824, save his famous Baltimore discourse and his “Essays on National Literature.” Sparks had, indeed, produced some of his less considerable theological works before 1824, but of his reliable and engaging historical and biographical works, — his Washington, his Franklin, his “Correspondence of the American Revolution,” and the like, — nothing. Prescott could not be read when the last half-century opened. In 1814, a crust of bread, thrown playfully by a college classmate, in Commons Hall, at Cambridge, struck Prescott’s eye, whence came his blindness; and so, with subsequent years of pain, and foreign travel, and care of foreign and native oculists, and toil of learning, with the aid of friendly readers, this most patient and persevering of all scholars did not get well engaged in the study of Spanish literature and history until about 1825. Not until 1837 did his first great work, “Ferdinand and Isabella,” the pioneer of a list so valuable, all now on our shelves, charm the literary world.

The seer of Concord was teaching school, and giving little promise of his after-reputation. Whipple, most happy essayist, was not five years old. Bancroft brought out the first volume of his brilliant “History of the United States” just ten years after this library opened; and while I speak the publishers are placing in our hands the tenth and last volume, the crowning stone in the monument, forty years in building, of enduring fame. Richard Hildreth, seven years the junior of Bancroft, was undergraduate at Cambridge. Motley, the rare historian, whose fame has since gone over the world, was a boy of ten years, at home in Dorchester. His “Dutch Republic,” first of his valuable con-

tributions to literature, appeared in 1856. Parkman, too, now among the foremost of historians, was in his cradle. Of America's beloved, now patriarch, poet, Bryant, of fourscore years, little had been published beyond his "Thanatopsis." Of the Peabodys, twin brothers, little had come. The one, sweet Psalmist in our Israel, had not written his fine lyric, "Behold the beauteous western light;" while the friend of these brothers, the present Plummer Professor in Harvard University, whose literary contributions have been since so valuable, and to whom our branch library has been indebted, was then an undergraduate in the college. Winthrop, the accomplished President of the Massachusetts Historical Society, whose name, like that of Ticknor, appears in the annals of the City Library as Trustee, Commissioner, steadfast watchman of its progress, was, with his classmate, our late most successful war minister at the Court of St. James, an undergraduate at Cambridge. Hillard, honored Special Trustee of this branch library we are dedicating, entered Harvard College that opening year of the half-century but to bear away the first honors of his class, and, with subsequent years, to bear fruits so abundant and ripe in general Literature, Law, Jurisprudence, in Geography, History, Biography, Travels, and, most difficult of all, perhaps, in School Reading Books that instruct and please the young. Nearly all these, his works, we have here, to-day, while our fathers of 1824 had not one.

Whittier, when the half-century opened, was at work, quietly, as became his Quaker principles, a boy of sixteen, on his father's farm on the banks of the Merrimack. How would the little library here have been gladdened to have seen his day! Longfellow and Hawthorne, classmates, were in Bowdoin College; no "Psalm of Life," no "Twice Told Tales," so curiously wrought, for many a day. The genial "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table," whose tender fancy and wondrous wit now charm and amuse all, was anxiously looking forward to the examination that should enthrone him Freshman in Harvard. Fields, our poet-publisher, was four years old. Lowell was five years old;—no "Poems," no "Biglow Papers," no "Essays and Reviews" then born, that so sparkled in after years. Nothing, indeed, could the boys of 1824 have known of Lossing, of Parton and "Peter Parley," of the Abbotts, of "Oliver Optic," of Bayard Taylor, of "Col. Ingham," and Horatio Alger, Jr.,—all so eagerly read now by the young; while of popular dictionaries, encyclopædias, lesson-books of every description, of works in Biography and Travels, in Science and Natural Philosophy and History, on foreign as well as domestic lands, on explorations towards the north pole and the south, on Egypt and Palestine; while of reviews and periodicals, of maps and charts, how great was the comparative lack!

Of the many American female writers now enjoyed in all libraries, yet partly or wholly unknown in 1824, I need not remind you. The names of Sedgwick, Sigourney, Child, "Grace Greenwood," "Gail Hamilton," of Stowe, Alcott, Phelps, Whitney, and of whole classes, more or less happily represented by them, come unbidden to mind.

Time will scarce allow us to look across the water for further illustrations. Of Sir Walter Scott, though of his earliest separate works a few had reached the library, no popular editions had been issued. His authorship of the Waverley novels was not avowed, and he was still, both in Europe and America, half-knowingly pronounced "the great unknown." Tennyson, Poet Laureate of England, — now first of living poets, shall we say? as do some critics, — was only fourteen years old. "Sketches by Boz," the corner-stone of Dickens's fame, were not collected and published till 1836. Unknown to this, as to all libraries for circulation of that date, were the quaint genius of Carlyle, the quiet humor of Hood, the sparkling wit of Douglas Jerrold, the sweetness of Charles Lamb, of William and of Mary Howitt, the stirring verse of Mrs. Browning, the fine art pictures of Ruskin. Agassiz, whose investigations in science have shed such light on the age, dimmed now, indeed, in his recent departure from this life, was then a student of seventeen years in the Medical School of Zurich.

Some fifteen years, indeed, passed over the opening of the library before Dana's "Two Years Before the Mast," so widely read, appeared; but the productions of his distinguished father, poet and essayist, early adorned its shelves. The "Airs of Palestine," still welcomed, was here at the beginning; and, with other works also of the gifted Pierpont, came at its publication his admirable "American First Class Book," which so helped to form the literary taste of its day. The names of Phillips and Parker, our sturdy reformers; Richard Frothingham and of George E. Ellis, among the scholars of our early Revolutionary history; of the Drakes, father and sons; of the Whitney brothers, Josiah and William Dwight, — standing now among the foremost authors in scientific investigation and oriental scholarship, — were not yet known. In genealogical research, so fruitful of late in studious authors, no Bond or Savage; no Ewer or Drake, or Ward; no Bell or Shepard, Kidder or Dean, Towne or Trask, or Whitmore had yet written. Indeed, of the many popular preachers and lecturers of the present day, young or old, effective writers and speakers at the bar and on the platform, in the reviews, magazines and newspapers, how few works had been produced when the half-century opened!

In this rapid contrast of the ages, we are somewhat instructed on the relative dearth of popular books when a library for circulation was

first opened here, fifty years ago. Notwithstanding all the abatements I have named, it embraced many valuable books. I hoped to have enumerated them in classes, but must forbear, and refer you to the early catalogues with but a passing notice. The grand old English classics in prose and verse were well represented. I am sorry to think that they were more read then, by the people of our country generally, than now. Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" was there, and Hume, and Robertson, and Hallam's "Middle Ages." Plutarch, with several of the best Greek and Roman classics, Mitford's Greece, and Goldsmith, and Middleton, and Junius, and, as about contemporary with the latter, Madame de Stael, were included. Works of the Pilgrim Fathers and of their descendants stood quietly on the shelves without jostling Swedenborg. The writings of that accurate, accomplished scholar, Andrews Norton, were there. The healthy works of the Aikins, father and daughter, of Mrs. Barbauld, Jane Porter, and, almost without a peer among female writers, of Maria Edgeworth, were there. Russell's "Modern Europe," Gordon's "American Revolution," "The History of Worcester County," by the Rev. Mr. Whitney of Northboro', and some few other local American histories, and what I suppose the young then read, as they do now, "The Pilgrim's Progress," "The Vicar of Wakefield," "The Exiles of Siberia," "Children of the Abbey," "The Arabian Nights' Entertainments," "Don Quixote," and "Robinson Crusoe," were embraced.

A few of the best works of fiction, such of Scott and of Cooper as had come, and some others, were there. There was some home-made fiction in this town then. The wife of the minister, Mrs. Hannah (Webster) Foster, is enumerated in Allibone's great Dictionary among female writers of fiction, as having produced one of the earliest American novels, "The Coquette, or the History of Eliza Wharton," which, as founded on fact, and introducing under other names some leading personages of the day, awakened great interest. It has, indeed, within a few years, passed through a second edition, with a preface by the American authoress, Jane E. Locke. Both daughters of Rev. Dr. Foster, Mrs. Harriet V. Cheney and Mrs. Eliza Cushing, Allibone likewise enumerates. They both, with their mother, at the fine old parsonage on Foster street here, named for the family, beneath noble elm trees that shadowed the house, and that stand to-day, composed works,— "A Peep at the Pilgrims," "Confessions of an Early Christian Martyr," "The Rivals of Acadia," "Esther, a Dramatic Poem," with books specially for the young, and other works.

Still, it must be confessed that a portion of books in that early library came from a class of authors described by Jean Paul. He said few things better than this: "There are a few powerful authors," he

tells us, "who punish their readers, as did the Roman tyrants of old, by depriving them of sleep while they read; but most writers are too benevolent to do this." A terrible sarcasm that word benevolent suggests. Now, "Zimmerman on Solitude," to look on the last page of the catalogue, might be counted soothing to-day. A very benevolent author that, to suffer you to sleep as you read him! Young's "Night Thoughts," too, might prove a little drowsy. Some thought thus of it, even in the day of this voluminous author. Let us open the first page of the catalogue. "Adam's Fall" meets us, a duodecimo volume, printed at Philadelphia, in 1811; and Richard Baxter's "Saints' Rest," printed in Boston, with no date; whence I infer it was designed for all ages. Both these volumes might prove uninteresting to many now, who would not question their wholesomeness. "The Straight Gate and the Narrow Way, infinitely to be preferred to the Wide Gate and the Broad Way," is another book of the same stamp. Jean Paul could not have meant these when he spoke of books that deprived their readers of sleep. "An Alarm to Unconverted Sinners," by Joseph Alleine; duodecimo, London, 1763. This book, we may suppose, had become a little soporific to some of Cotton Mather's day; for it is the book of which he says mournfully, "When it goes hard for some of our young people to peruse the 'Alarm to Unconverted Sinners,' what shall we not fear for the growing degeneracy of the land!" This book, bearing the small book-plate of the early Social Library, is still by transfer in the present branch library. I beg you, Mr. Mayor, our honored city father, as, in some sense, custodian of the public morals, to look after this matter of Mather's degeneracy; for our branch librarian told me, the other day, that this "Alarm" had not once been taken out by young people since she held office here; and never, as she knew, consulted but by a single frequenter to the library, of sixty-two years of age, and then as a curious relic, he told her, most worthy of preservation on the shelves, from that remote past. I believe, Mr. Mayor, I was myself that exceptional consulter of the "Alarm."

As books could not well be duplicated in that early library, the fifth article in its constitution wisely provided, that "Two or more proprietors wanting at the same time any particular book, the highest bidder shall have it." In this way, considerable gain accrued to the treasury. Our own age is not well pleased with this auction system; and in our public libraries generally, as well as abroad, duplicates, more or less, of the most popular works are added.

Of all the original proprietors of the library of the half-century past, only four survive,—Messrs. William Richards Champney, Ebenezer Fuller, Jesse Osborn and Horace Pierce,—all, with a single exception,

having, by a kind Providence, passed their fourscore years. With a very few other citizens of their own age, in this ward, they are the honored guests of the City Library Trustees this evening. While they rejoice with us in the completion and inauguration of this cherished enterprise, we in turn extend to them our cordial greeting for the humbler, though so useful, institution, which they thus early founded, with our earnest wishes for the Father's blessing in this protracted evening of their days.

We pass to notice, briefly, the second library for circulation in this place, with which the first was merged in 1858. The Brighton Library Association, composed of young men, for the circulation of books, for maintaining courses of public lectures and exercises in declamation, composition and debate, was incorporated in accordance with the Statutes of the Commonwealth, January 15, 1858. Funds for the foundation of the library were received from donations and assessments, and from the proceeds of a social fair given by the ladies. This association, indeed, had its origin in a literary society of young men organized here, two years before this incorporation, for intellectual improvement. The town furnished rooms for the association in its hall, on condition that whenever a regular free town library should be established, the books and property of the association should revert and be vested in the town. A flourishing library was gathered. Debates, with original essays by the members, contributed instruction and entertainment. The first catalogue of the association was issued in 1857, and a second and larger catalogue in 1859. Able lecturers were enjoyed; an early winter list, as we gather from the records, consisting of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Rev. Samuel K. Lothrop, D.D., Mrs. Julia Barrows, of Boston, in readings, Edwin P. Whipple, Wm. E. Richardson, Dr. J. V. C. Smith, Hon. Josiah Quincy, Jr., Rev. J. C. Fletcher, Wendell Phillips, Oliver Wendell Holmes, M. D., and Mr. Emerson in a second engagement. The character of other courses of lectures was well represented in these names.

To this library association of young men, though inaugurated nearly a score of years ago, I desire thus publicly to express most deserved praise. It wrought a good work. It was in the interest of literature and useful knowledge. It improved the minds of its members. It made a mark on its day. It accumulated valuable books. Its debates stirred thought on many topics of the time. Pages, not sentences, were needed to tell of its years of active usefulness. By some future annalist must they be told, and not here and now. Its full and well-kept records, with names of officers and members, remain. Its books and property, held by three Trustees, — Messrs. William Warren, Theodore Matchett, and Edmund Rice, Jr., — for the town, were, by them, through legal in-

struments, conveyed to the town in 1864, on the establishment of the Holton Public Library. The property has, by the act of annexation, passed into the city's hands, constituting her branch library in this ward. The city's possession to such property of the association rests, as did the town's possession, on these legal instruments.* Thus a similar case is furnished here, as in the Roxbury branch of the Boston Public Library; where, by legally executed instruments, the property of the Fellowes Athenæum inures to the benefit of the city.

By the bequest of Mr. James Holton, of an ancient family, in this place, who died here, on the 29th of April, 1863, the foundation was laid for a free public library. The town took action at the first annual meeting ensuing, in 1864. A Board of Trustees was chosen, who elected for their first president, Mr. John Ruggles, who, for eighteen years, had been the successful and attached Principal of the High School here. In the following year he resigned the presidency on removing from town. They elected for their first treasurer, Mr. Life Baldwin, who held office until the termination of the town's corporate existence, and for their first librarian and secretary, Mr. J. P. Cushing Winship, who, declining re-election after two years, was succeeded in the former office by Mr. Webster F. Warren, and in the latter by Mr. Bela S. Fiske. Convenient apartments were fitted up in the Town Hall edifice; and on the first day of September, 1864, the two library halls, with well-filled alcoves and reading-room, were open for public inspection and for the distribution of rules and regulations. On the third of September, books were issued under Mr. Winship, and his two assistants, Zachary Taylor Cushman and Wm. Henry Pierce. In aid of Mr. Winship, the services of Mr. Webster F. Warren, while student in the Cambridge Law School, were likewise shortly secured, who, as subsequent librarian, discharged the duties of the office until the annexation. His succeeding assistants were Frederic A. Pierce, Hiram N. Cushman, Herbert L. Waterman, Edwin O. Kimball, and Misses Mary Jane Bowker, present librarian, and Clara A. Wentworth, present first assistant of the branch. The first catalogue of the Holton Public Library was issued in June, 1866, and the second, an octavo of nearly five hundred pages, in March, 1872-1874.

With fresh gratitude we recall in these exercises the generous friend on whose bequest our late town library was founded. But for his interest and forethought for the place of his birth, the city might not have had the goodly collection of books it now counts second in the number of volumes, among all her branches, nor the elegant edifice which she dedicates this evening, among the fairest of her public buildings. The beneficence of our benefactor, Mr. James Holton,

* See Appendix for copies of the same.

flowed in many channels, but in none worthier than in this library foundation. It was my privilege, on his decease, at the request of the Trustees of our Public Library, to prepare for publication his memoir, which stands now on the shelves of this branch, in which his life and character, his genealogical descent, and the whole story of his beneficence is detailed. Not in this place alone, but far and wide, among kindred and friends, to the Farm School of our city, and chief to her Seamen's Bethel, made residuary legatee to his ample estate, did his liberality extend. That story of his life needs not to be repeated now. Yet one passage I crave your indulgence to borrow from my memoir.

Pliny, the younger, writing to Tacitus of the death of his uncle, Pliny the elder, caused by the dreadful lava and vapors overwhelming Herculaneum and Pompeii in the year 79 of the Christian Era, says that he deems them happy whom the Gods have permitted either to do what is worthy to be written, or to write what is worthy to be read. A translation gives but feebly his fine thought, — "*Equidem beatos puto quibus deorum munere datum est aut facere scribenda aut scribere legenda; beatissimos vero, quibus utrumque.*" If it was not the gift of our friend to wield the pen for the admiration of mankind, then surely shall his generous deeds be spoken and written by other hands. He shall be ever gratefully remembered here. His honest face, outspoken a heart that loved his fellow-men, and we believe was right with God, is seen on the book-plates of many useful and elegant volumes which he bequeathed. His name is cut in the enduring stone, on the outer front of the edifice. His tall and graceful monument, prepared in exquisite taste under the direction of his executor, Mr. Life Baldwin, carved in granite, stands in Evergreen Cemetery, one of Boston's most attractive garden burial-places in this ward. The features of his countenance, his whole personal bearing, his costume, are perfectly preserved in the admirable life-size portrait, executed by Lay, of Boston, which, by the generosity of Mr. Theodore Matchett, one of the first Trustees, adorns the interior of our library. Not less surely will be preserved and perpetuated, yes, and for ages after painting and canvas have faded and crumbled, every good influence which, through his charitable deeds and the volumes which his munificence provided, has been wrought.

The edifice which we dedicate this evening, designed by Mr. George F. Fuller, architect, a native of this place, occupies a beautiful and commanding site. The town, in the summer of 1873, purchased the estate of Mr. Life Baldwin, on Rockland street, comprising little more than one acre, sold and removed the buildings to the corner of Brighton avenue and Malvern street; and on the 31st of July, ground was broken, under the direction of Mr. Simeon W. Brown of this place,

contractor for the cellar and grading. With no special ceremonies on laying the corner-stone, the work was prosecuted under Messrs. Achen & Taggart, in brick; Knox & Angier, in granite; Crowley & Coughlan, in freestone; Charles Bowery, in carpentry; the Chelmsford Iron Company, in iron; E. G. Morrison, in plastering and stucco; J. Cooper, in gas and plumbing; J. O. Tubbs, in painting; Walker, Pratt & Co., in steam-heating; E. S. Parker & Co., in slating and copper. The entire cost incurred by town and city was nearly seventy thousand dollars.

On the annexation of the town with Boston, in January, 1874, the edifice passed from the control of the Building Committee, Messrs. Nathaniel Jackson, Jacob F. Taylor, J. P. Cushing Winship, and Frederic A. Whitney, to that of the Superintendent of Public Buildings, Mr. James C. Tucker. The removal of the books and maps, the fine clock, pictures and furniture, from the Town Hall building on Washington street, was begun on the 21st of August last, and completed on the 24th.

With some modifications in the interior of the edifice, suggested by the wide experience of Mr. Winsor, Superintendent of the Public Library, the architect has given us a building of great beauty and convenience, and of ample dimensions for the increase of many years.

We anticipate that increase more and more, both in the grand Central Library and in all its branches. The Superintendent, in his last monthly report for September, 1874, puts the total number of volumes at 267,273. We prophecy that in two years he will announce the total more than 300,000 volumes. This may be counted but a modest collection by the side of the National Library of Paris, the largest in the world, with its two million volumes and its multitude of pamphlets; or of that of the British Museum (with its twelve miles of shelving), or that of the Imperial Library of St. Petersburg, with a million each; the Royal Library of Munich, with nine hundred thousand, of Berlin and Vienna, of Copenhagen, of Dresden, and of Stuttgart, with about six or seven hundred thousand each. But when we contrast the present numbers of the Boston Public Library (which no longer means the Central Library on Boylston street alone, but that with all its branches) with the meagre four thousand books with which it opened twenty years ago, in its humble quarters on Mason street, we find occasion certainly for mutual congratulation. Of the branch libraries, this which we dedicate this evening comprises nearly twelve thousand volumes.

Of the distinguished actors in the early organization of the Boston Public Library, in movements which began about 1850, several have already passed away, — Bates, Phillips, Lawrence, Everett, Ticknor,

Bigelow, Washburn, Pond, Shurtleff and others. From a somewhat careful examination of what they and their associates spoke and wrote regarding the enterprise, I have found no prediction of branch libraries to cluster around the Central Library. Mayor Smith alone, in his address at the laying of the corner-stone in Boylston street, on the 225th anniversary of the settlement of Boston, September 30, 1855, bids his hearers "contemplate for a moment that distant period when this fair city shall have expanded over a territory of many miles into the suburban precincts and adjacent cities, coalescing with the population and increasing it to hundreds of thousands, or even millions, and when commerce, manufactures and industrial pursuits have given it a wide-spread renown." But even his fancy stops short of the reality which our eyes behold, of these many circling branch libraries all bound to a common centre, each "free to all, using them with no other restrictions than are necessary for the preservation of the books,"—that wise motto, or condition of Mr. Bates, our most munificent benefactor,—each offering to all and all to each its own accumulated stores.

And to this great end, the free, unrestricted use and benefit of the people within these most reasonable limits of "due care for the preservation of the books," we dedicate this library. With prayer to Almighty God, feeling that "except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it," we dedicate it as if it were—nay! we avow it is—a temple for his service. With the sweet voices of children in glad song we dedicate it, for who, more than they, shall we trust are to reap its advantages? Stores of knowledge, not so generally as in the early ages, in abstract form, but more and more popularized shall it contain. And so we will not lament that we had not lived in the golden age of Pericles, nor walked in the porches of Athens, nor sat at the feet of her philosophers. A greater than they all is here,—in the later investigations of science, in broader thought and sweeter charity, in the disclosures and motives of the Christian religion, in manifold forms in which useful knowledge and science and art are made day by day to bear on life and to elevate humanity. With tender memories of the martyrs of genius, who in other times have so toiled for scantiest supplies of books so showered on us, we would dedicate the library to the most reverent use and truest improvement of its ample resources.

Hail scholars and sages of literature, science and song, who, through successive ages, have enlightened and guided the race! We would woo your spirit continually to these halls which our hands have built, and to whose steadily gathering works we dedicate them. Master spirits, shining, it may be singly in your own day, or, like heaven's clustering starry throngs, as in that rich period of English history which falls

between the reigns of Elizabeth and of the second Charles, or of Queen Anne. Friends, these immortal names need not be further spoken. They are on your tongues, and they are still ours. Passing on, they have not died. Our halls shall be more and more illuminated with their light. They live to us here and shall forever live. Who truer than our Longfellow has thus sung?

“ Were a star quenched on high,
For ages would its light,
Still travelling downward from the sky,
Shine on our mortal sight.
So when a great man dies,
For years beyond our ken,
The light he leaves behind him lies
Upon the path of men.”

The obituary of the year that is closing is marked, as few years have been, by the departure of two men, scholars, statesmen, patriots, lights on two hemispheres, — Guizot, who expired in France on the 13th of last month, patriarch of nearly fourscore years and ten, and Sumner, who died our senator, at Washington, on the 11th of March last, aged threescore years and three. Prominent both for scholarship, for the love and defence of true republican institutions, both passed on, leaving few peers on either continent, yet calmly anticipating the broader light of civil, social, intellectual and moral reform which is surely to irradiate the nations.

So to the fragrant memory of the wise and good in religion and literature we dedicate our halls. Nor less gladly will we consecrate them to science, the God-appointed handmaid both of religion and letters. The library that is not hospitable to all sincere and reverent disciples of science is unworthy of the age. In the stormy conflict of our day between science and faith, we would point to Agassiz, the noble child of science, bowed in lowly prayer at the opening of the Anderson School on the Island of Penekese, so shortly before his ascension, and dedicate our choice institution, with undisturbed assurance, to the everlasting union of letters and science and faith.

The address occupied one hour and five minutes in the delivery. The congregation then joined the choir in singing “My Country, ’tis of Thee,” and this was followed by “Old Hundred,” in which all joined.

The benediction was pronounced by the Rev. HENRY A. STEVENS of the Second Church.

APPENDIX.

THE legal instruments referred to in Mr. Whitney's address here follow : —

I.

Whereas, The town of Brighton has made suitable provision for the maintenance and increase of the library of this Association, and has secured to this Association the library room for the meetings of the Association, thus performing all the conditions necessary to entitle said town to the library and other property of the Association, and has authorized the Trustees of the Holton Library to receive the same, therefore —

Voted, That the Trustees of the library be and they hereby are requested to transfer and deliver up to the Trustees of the Holton Library, at such time as said last-named Board shall be ready to receive it, the library, and other property of the Association; and be and hereby are authorized to execute any and all instruments that may be necessary or proper, as evidence of such transfer.

Voted, That this corporation accepts the use of the library room, hitherto enjoyed by them, by the provisions of the town, as a full performance of the condition annexed to Article fifth, Section second, of the constitution of said corporation, and hereby renounces all claim upon the town for any matter or thing growing out of the transfer of said library to said Trustees of the Holton Library.

Resolved, That this Association, when about resigning its property to the town, takes occasion to express the gratification of its members, that the change is to be made under such favorable auspices, and to express their hope and belief that the usefulness of the library will be increased in proportion to the increase of its resources.

Resolved, That while we are grateful to the town for the privileges which have been accorded to us, we ought especially to remember those of our fellow-citizens by whose efforts the library of this Association was founded and has been up to the present time maintained and increased; that we tender to all such our heartfelt thanks.

Resolved, That these votes and resolutions be signed by the officers of this Association and be transmitted to the Chairman of the Trustees

In witness whereof we have hereunto, in our capacity as Trustees as aforesaid, set our hands this thirteenth day of June, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-four.

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| WILLIAM WARREN, | } Trustees of the |
| THEODORE MATCHETT, | |
| EDMUND RICE, | |
| | } Brighton Libra- |
| | } ry Association. |

To the Chairman of the Trustees of the Holton Library : —

DEAR SIR, — I transmit the above original draft of certain votes and resolutions passed by the Brighton Library Association at its annual meeting, which I request you to have preserved in the Holton Library, in accordance with the last of said resolutions.

Truly, your obedient servant,
 AUGUSTUS MASON,
Secretary of the Brighton Library Association.

BRIGHTON, June 13th, 1864.